

Message Text

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10

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

OMB-01 AID-20 IO-12 T-03 RSR-01 /116 W

----- 057833

R 150500 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 492

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

COMUSMACTHAI

USDEL FRANCE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PHNOM PENH 2303

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CB, PGOV, PINT

SUBJECT: MARSHAL LON NOL SUGGESTS NEW LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

1. A RADIO COMMUNIQUE ON MARCH 14 ANNOUNCED THAT MARSHAL LON NOL HAD INSTRUCTED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF ELECTIONS FOR A NEW PARLIAMENT. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE MARCH 14 MINISTER OF INFORMATION KEAM RETH STATED THAT IT WAS CONTEMPLATED THAT SUCH ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD ONLY AFTER A CEASE- FIRE AND WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN TROOPS AND UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE ICC. HE ALSO RELATED THE DECISION TO CURRENT STRIKES AND UNREST.

2. KEAM RETH SAID THAT GOVERNMENT EMISSARIES HAD CONTACTED REPRESENTATIVES OF VARIOUS INSURGENT FACTIONS AND ASKED THEM TO TRANSMIT THE PROPOSAL TO THEIR COMRADS. HE STRESSED THE APPARENT LACK OF UNIFIED LEADERSHIP AMONG THE INSURGENTS AND THE DIFFICULTY OF NEGOTIATION WITH THEM. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION KEAM RETH SAID THAT ALL THE INSURGENTS WOULD BE PERMITTED TO VOTE FREELY, BUT HE WAS EVASIVE IN REPLYING TO THE QUESTION WHETHER

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THE KHMER ROUGE AND KHMER RUMDOH WOULD BE PERMITTED TO PRESENT THEMSELVES AS CANDIDATES. THE TRANSLATION WAS EXTREMELY POOR, HOWEVER, AND NO ONE PRESENT WAS QUITE SURE THAT THE QUESTION HAD BEEN PUT TO HIM PROPERLY. KEAM RETH DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ADD NEW MINISTERS TO ACCOMMODATE THE INSURGENTS.

HE WAS ALSO EVASIVE ON QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE CONSTITUTION, WHICH DOES NOT ENVISAGE DISSOLUTION OF THE PRESENT ASSEMBLY EXCEPT AS RESULT OF TWO VOTES OF NO CONFIDENCE IN THE ENTIRE CABINET WITHIN A PERIOD OF EIGHTEEN MONTHS.

3. COMMENT: THE ANNOUNCEMENT IS APPARENTLY A PREMATURE AND POSSIBLY UNCOORDINATED DISCLOSURE OF A NEGOTIATION PROPOSAL WHICH THE GKR HAS DISCUSSED WITH US, AND WHICH WAS REPORTED IN RESTRICTED CHANNELS. THE REASON FOR ITS PUBLICATION ARE OBSCURE AND OBVIOUSLY ALL DETAILS HAD NOT BEE THOUGHT OUT WHEN THE COMMUNIQUE WAS ISSUED.

4. THE EMBASSY IS TRYING TO OBTAIN FURTHER CLARIFICATION OF GKR INTENTIONS.

SWANK

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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30 JUN 2005

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